

many particulars a good deal of industry and zeal, and his lectures on the pathology of dropsy and diabetes, though they contain very few original ideas, are well worth an attentive perusal. D. F. C.

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- XV. *Handbuch der Allgemeinen Therapie zum Gebrauch bei Seinen Vorlesungen.* Von Dr. JOHANN WILHELM HEINRICH CONRADI, Königl. Grossbritannisch. Hannoverschem Hofrath, Professor der Medicin zu Göttingen, der Königl. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften daselbst und Mehrerer gelehrten Gesellschaften Mitglieder. Cassel, 1833, 8vo. pp. 155.
- Manual of General Therapeutics, for the use of his Pupils.* By JOHN WILLIAM HENRY CONRADI, &c. &c.

The department of therapeutics, which embraces the general principles of medical practice, has been merged too much in our publications, as well as in our schools, in that of *materia medica* or pharmacology; and both authors and professors have been too apt to leave the deeply interesting study of the great modes in which remedial agents produce their effects, and to dwell upon the dry detail of the sensible and chemical properties of medicinal substances with the interminable catalogue of diseased conditions on which they have been—too often empirically—administered.

It has always appeared to us that there is a cardinal failing in this mode of viewing the subject. The department of therapeutics should be taught distinct from that of pharmacology. The doctrine of the great general rules for medicinal administration, and the principles on which they are founded, should be deeply impressed upon the mind of the student, and not until this is effected can he be enabled to comprehend the application of individual articles to special emergencies.

Such is the plan adopted in some of the best medical institutions on the European continent;—the department of general therapeutics being separated from that of the practice of medicine, as well as from *materia medica*, and constituting the duties assigned to a distinct chair. Similar feelings, regarding the “fitness of things,” have given occasion to separate publications on general therapeutics, of which the work now before us is one. In our own language, we have no original work on the subject. Indeed, the translation of *Begin* is the only one we recollect at this moment, as accessible to the English student in his own tongue. In Germany, the writers on this branch have been numerous; and the names of Hecker, Ackerman, Ch. W. Hufeland, Ph. G. Hensler, Augustin, Horsch, Sprengel, Remur, Bartels, Mushardt, Berndt, Siebergundi, Winkler, and F. G. Gmelin, may be favourably specified.

The work of M. Conradi is intended, as the title indicates, for the followers of his lectures, as Professor of Medicine at Göttingen; and if, as is presumable, the “*Handbuch*” be a fair sample of the instruction he communicates, we should not be strongly impressed with its excellence. It has not the character of mysticism that prevails in the manual of the Messrs. Schorf, which we noticed in our last number. It is sufficiently plain and intelligible, but many of the views are antiquated; others, it appears to us, are erroneous; and the whole is behind the present advanced condition of pathological and therapeutical science.

We are pleased to observe the stress which M. Conradi places upon the necessity, in every case, of investigating the seat and nature of the diseased action;—an indispensable prerequisite for correct therapeutics. The routinist, like the homœopathist, attends only to the prominent symptoms; and his practice is accordingly unsatisfactory. He may do good, but as similar morbid manifestations may be produced by very opposite pathological conditions, his remedies may be, and often are, productive of harm. The judicious and the correct pathologist seeks out the suffering organ; he does not rest until he satisfies himself, so far as circumstances will admit, of the precise character of the morbid derangement, whether it is excited primarily in the tissue or organ, which exhibits prominent signs of morbid action, or whether it may not be induced consecutively—the primary mischief being situated elsewhere. All this requires science—an adequate knowledge of physiology and pathology, practised observation, and a wise discrimination; and not until he has satisfied his mind does the therapist attempt to lay down indications of cure, or to think of the particular remedial agents of which he shall avail himself for the removal of the malady.

Under the head of Indications of Cure, &c. (*von den Anzeigen zur Cur*, u. s. w.) we have the following attentions recommended, several of which are not generally regarded with us as devolving upon the medical practitioner, and those that would seem to do so, are of doubtful propriety. The practitioner should never abandon all hope, so long as the vital functions persist, however subdued their action may be. His exertions for the restoration of the patient should be unremittently continued, and if this course be followed to the proper extent, there will be no necessity for those remedial agents suggested by M. Conradi, for mitigating what have been termed, but improperly, the pangs of death. Every thing, indeed, induces the belief, that during what is called the "agony" of death, the sufferer is only such in name. Whilst sensibility persists, he will generally complain of no uneasiness; and during the last heavings of departing life he is usually in a state of total anæsthesia;—dead to the external and internal world, as far as regards the perception of impressions, and consequently devoid of all suffering.

"When death is inevitable, the cares of the physician must still be given to the dying, to render his death, as far as practicable, easy, (*ügsaraciz*.) The kind of death, however, differs according to the difference in the disease, age, and constitution of individuals; and accordingly the mitigation of the pangs of death, which is, at times, more or less necessary and practicable, has to be modified according to these different circumstances. If it be clear from certain signs, that the patient must die, he ought, at the least, to be no longer incommoded by the administration of troublesome and useless agents. Every thing that can occasion pain, or mental or corporeal distress,—as irritating applications, and the lamentations of the bystanders, (for even the dying have often consciousness,) ought to be avoided; whilst the admission of fresh air; a comfortable position; moistening the parched mouth; and especially a pleasing attention to the wants of the body; as well as a due pacification of the mind, by the circum-spect introduction of the consolations of religion; and an attentive regard to the wishes respecting those that are to be left behind ought to be inculcated. According to the different circumstances of the patient, he may be refreshed by analeptic agents—naphtha, wine, cinnamon water, &c. or his pains, and agony, (*Todesangst*,) may be calmed by soothing agents, especially opium, (and particularly according to Behrends plan—by giving him from time to time small

doses of the tincture of opium with *naphtha aceti*;) or the threatening of suffocation, and the collection of matters on the lungs may be palliated by expectorants." p. 38.

What expectation of benefit can be indulged in such, almost hopeless cases, from the administration of any agents belonging to the uncertain and inefficient class of experiments? Their experiments might exhibit to the bystanders the attention of the practitioner; but it is impossible that he could calculate upon any benefit from them; and we are astonished to see that M. Conradi should consider them worthy even of mention.

As respects the *modus operandi* of medicinal agents in general, our author eschews the exclusive views of the humorists and the solidists; wisely remarking, that their agency must be exerted both on the solids and fluids.

"If remedies, by their influence on the solid parts, elevate or depress the different manifestations of the vital powers in the same—the irritability, sensibility, &c. or give them a new destination or direction, or change the physical and mechanical properties of the same by contraction or relaxation; they must equally occasion changes in the motion and condition of the humors." p. 40.

The division of the methods of cure, adopted by M. Conradi, will be best understood by the titles of his different chapters. The arrangement does not appear to us to be happy or lucid. 1. Antiphlogistic and relaxant methods. 2. The excitant. 3. The tonic. 4. The soothing, (*methodus sedans seu paragonica*.) 5. The revulsive. 6. The resolvent, (*die auflösende methode*.) 7. The evacuant in general. 8. The production of vomiting. 9. The cathartic method, and also the carminative and anthelmintic. 10. The diuretic. 11. The diaphoretic. 12. The expectorant. 13. The promotion of the nasal secretion. 14. The evacuations by the mouth, and especially the promotion of the salivary excretion. 15. The promotion of menstruation, and the lochial discharge. 16. Of blood-letting. 17. Of arresting excessive evacuations. 18. Of the method for removing dyscrasia, and also of the cure of poisoning; and lastly, of the treatment of organic diseases.

The specific affinity exerted by particular remedial agents for particular tissues of the body cannot be questioned. It is this which occasions the cathartic to act on the bowels; the diuretic on the kidneys, &c. even when the agent is injected into the mass of blood. Few therapists, however, could venture upon the following specification of the preference exhibited for articles of the same class upon different organs or systems. It is but justice to M. Conradi to state, that he considers the action of some of them doubtful; and he suggests that fresh experiments are necessary.

"Specific excitants of the lymphatic system are mercurials, antimonials, alkalies, preparations of lime, *terra ponderosa salita* *calcaria muriatica*, *spongia marina usta*, and iodine itself, *cicuta*, *digitalis*, *belladonna*, *dulcamara*, *arnica*, &c.

"Excitants of the skin are the diffusible stimulants in general, especially camphor; also the *spiritus mindereri*, *liquor C. C. succinatus*, *pulv. Doveri*, sulphur, antimonials, the *Sambucus*, *guaiacum*, *dulcamara*, *jacea*, &c.

"Excitants of the lungs—*polygala amara*, *senega*, *squilla*, *lichen islandicus*, *marrubium*, *myrrha*, *gummi ammoniacum*, *feniculum*, *phellandrium*, *flores benzoes*, sulphur, antimonials, especially the sulphur *antimonii auratum* and *kermes minerale*, *spiritus salis ammoniaci anisatus*, &c.

"Excitants of the stomach and bowels; besides emetics and purgatives, espe-

cially *bitters*, (stomachica, visceralia,) which, however, have rather a tonic effect.

"Of the liver—*aloes, rheum, chelidonium, fel tauri, mercurius, alcali fixum.*

"Of the kidneys and urinary organs—*nitrum* and other neutral salts in small doses, acids, *juniperus, squilla, digitalis, colchicum, senega, ononis spinosa, levis-ticum, pyrola umbellata, uva ursi, terebinthina, petroleum, balsamum copaiivæ, cantharides, meloe majalis, &c.*

"Of the generative organs—*cantharides, sabina, varilla, aloë, balsamum copaiivæ, borax, phosphorus, &c.*" p. 62.

Independently of the objection of classing some of the "local stimulants"—and not others—under the head of excitants, well founded objections may be made to almost every portion of the author's arrangement. What evidence have we that the articles he has cited exert their action on the lymphatic system specifically? and even if we were to admit, which we readily do, that such agents as iodine—in the modifications which they impress upon the system of nutrition—do affect the absorbent system especially, it is not as easy for us to allow, that some of the other articles enumerated, act in a like manner.

Where is the evidence, again, that *aloes, rhubarb, ox's gall, &c.* act specifically on the liver? Every thing, indeed, in M. Conradi's treatise goes to show, that the science of therapeutics is not as far advanced as it ought to be,—certainly we may say as regards M. Conradi himself, and we may be justified perhaps in adding, seeing that he holds so prominent a situation in one of the most respectable universities of his country—in Germany. There is too much confidence exhibited in individual articles of the *materia medica*—too extensive a catalogue of therapeutical agents, and too limited a knowledge of the great general principles of therapeutics. This is strikingly apparent, not only in M. Conradi's work, but in almost every production of the German press, whilst the absurd and repulsive agents admitted into their different pharmacopœias go to corroborate the general deduction. At the present day, we scarcely expected to meet with such an expression as the following in any respectable therapeutical work. "Very questionable is the efficacy of the tractoration, (*Vestreichen*,) of morbid parts with the needles of Perkins, or of Perkinism." We were under the impression, that no one now admitted any specific virtue in Perkinism, and that it was but one of the many modes in which the imagination has been made at various times to act on the body—the *moral* on the *physical*. In this way its efficacy has been *unquestionable*; in every other null.

The *cinchona*, (*China*,) we are informed, possesses, in addition to its tonic effect, a power of diminishing immoderate excitability of the nervous system; or, according to Hensler—who ascribes this property to a volatile principle, it is *tonico-paregoric*, (*tonisch-paregorisch*.) M. Conradi ranges, in the same division of *tonico-paregorics*, the *Caryophyllata*, especially the *Millefolium*, which, he informs us, has long been considered to possess antispasmodic powers, and "has been recommended in spastic conditions of the abdomen, inordinate circulation in the portal system, and in hæmorrhoidal complaints," but what the signs are of spastic condition, or of inordinate circulation in the portal system, or of any of the derangements to which he refers, he does not, and we suspect could not inform us.

The object of M. Conradi's resolvent method, (*auflösende methode*,) is to remove any obstructions of the humours; and it corresponds to the vague de-

obstruent method, admitted by the older writers. It does not consist merely in the administration of agents, which resolve inspissated and obstructed humours chemically or mechanically, but which act on the humours through the soft parts. Now, the conditions, he tells us, that may give rise to such obstruction, are numerous; sometimes they consist in debility and relaxation of the solids; at others in augmented sensibility, and a spasmodic condition; at others they are connected with dyscrasy, dependent on syphilis or gout; whilst at others, again, there may be inflammation present, (p. 95.) Of course, the treatment has to be regulated according to the precise pathological state, which is presumed to give occasion to this supposititious disorder in the course of the humours. Amongst the resolvents adapted for augmenting the activity of the vessels, we have such drugs as the *Radix graminis*, *Beccabunga*, *Saponaria*, *Fumaria*, &c. recommended; precisely in the same manner as the most inert and irrational articles were proposed one hundred years ago, for fancied pathological derangements of the humours, and on not a whit more foundation.

There are many other points in the work of M. Conradi, with which it would be difficult for us to accord; but what we have already observed, will sufficiently exhibit the general character of the production. It may be well adapted to accompany his lectures; but it is manifestly not calculated to enable the young therapeutical inquirer to derive accurate information on a branch of medical science, which is daily becoming more and more demonstrative. Had it made its appearance in the middle of the last century, it might have depicted tolerably well the existing knowledge of, and manner of elucidating the subject; but it is totally unfit for the present era, at least in this meridian, for which, by the way, it was not intended. It is only to be regretted, that it cannot be looked upon as adapted at this day to any meridian. R. D.

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XVI. *Researches on some points of the History of Chorea in Children.* By M. RUFZ, Resident Physician at the Hospital for Children, at Paris. From the Archives Générales, February, 1834.

This essay is based upon the registers of the Hospital for Children at Paris, and on the private observations of the author, who was house physician during two years at that institution. Chorea is one of the very few diseases in which an error in diagnosis is scarcely practicable, from the obvious and distinct symptoms, which are unlike those observed in any other affection; hence, the registers of the Children's Hospital are sufficient to establish the relative frequency of cholera in the two sexes, and its occurrence at different seasons of the year, and at different periods of childhood. M. Rufz has examined other points relative to the history of chorea, which could not be ascertained from the registers of the hospital, but which were deduced from his personal observations.—To the talent and accuracy of M. Rufz as an observer, we can bear the highest testimony, from a long acquaintance, formed while prosecuting similar researches in other wards of the same hospital, and we are peculiarly gratified that he has ascertained, in a clear matter of fact manner, so many points in the natural history of chorea.

In the Children's Hospital at Paris, are received a large proportion of the children of the poorer inhabitants, between the ages of two and fifteen years.